



In



Depth



Information
you can use
about
**Huntington,
Salamonie
and
Mississinewa
Reservoirs**

Vol. 15 No. 3
**Winter
2002**

A publication from
the Upper Wabash
Interpretive Services
Teresa Rody, Editor

DNR

We Otter Know More

by Teresa Rody

As I talk with other employees from the Division of State Park and Reservoirs, conversations often return to the same statement. Many of us wish we had the time and staff to get out into the field and make more observations about the plant and animal life that make our properties their home. As we continue to share different ways to get involved at Salamonie, Mississinewa, and Huntington Reservoirs, I would like to ask for your help. Each of you could be our resource management eyes at the reservoir properties. We would like to begin a volunteer observation program at Salamonie that could expand to Huntington and Mississinewa Reservoirs also, if there is interest.

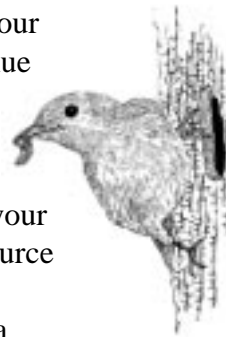
We have targeted three species at Salamonie: the river otter, bobwhite quail, and the eastern bluebird. Quail populations are quite low at Salamonie. Heavy snows in the 80's drastically lowered population numbers. Current resource management, especially in the small-game management area, is aimed at increasing these small populations back to a healthy level. We have installed and maintained bluebird nesting boxes at Salamonie for quite a

number of years. The current nest boxes are mapped, yet we do not have the staff available to monitor these houses and to evaluate whether there are needs for more houses in other areas. Finally, we

come to the third species, river otters. These graceful mammals were reintroduced here at Salamonie in 1998. I've written more below about the otters and my memories from the release. A few people have informed us when they have seen otters, but as time goes on people often don't realize these reports

continue to be important. Read on for an update on the river otter populations throughout Indiana; then stop in at the property office or the interpretive center, pick up some observation sheets, and help us inventory our natural resources.

Originally, river otters lived throughout Indiana. In the early 1900's, they disappeared due to unregulated trapping and hunting and the decline in the number and quality of wetland habitats. The River Otter Reintroduction Program began in 1995 to restore otters to six watersheds in the northern and southern part of the state. From 1995 through 1999, 303 Louisiana river otters were released at



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Interpreter's Insight



...nature
must be a
continuous circle
and we can be a
part of that
circle.

Someone asked me a while back, "Marv what's the best part of your job?" Without hesitation I replied, "the people who visit our properties - Huntington, Mississinewa and Salamonie Reservoirs." One of the things I love to do, as most of you know, is talk about how fortunate we are to have the natural resources we do. I like to discuss how we can work in partnership to make sure that the current resources will be here for generations to come.

Another reason I love my job is because of your interest in our natural world and how many of you are reaching out to help the Upper Wabash Interpretive Services during this time of financial difficulties. You will never cease to amaze me.

Jane Herzog comes in every Monday to clean the restrooms. She vacuums the display room and entrance rugs and washes the front door windows after a weekend of many visitors. She has also painted two beautiful pictures, one depicting the way the old center looked and another of the new center. Thank you Jane!

Austin Couden, an Eagle Scout candidate from Arcadia, IN has laid wood chips and stone, built two arbors, and made a walking path from the building to the garden.

Charles Kelley has helped with the preparations for Autumn Camping Weekend and helped the Master gardeners with our beautiful new garden.

Evelyn Wray and Richard and Sondra Bowman helped with preparations for Autumn Camping weekend and spruced up the building and garden for the Open House.

Mary Ann Eller and Karen Shrock, spent hours right up to Autumn Camping Weekend, working on patterns and other craft projects for the event.

Betty Gregerson and Ann Olinger have volunteered to be greeters at the Interpretive Center. They will also be doing some office chores, like filing, folding brochures, and cutting pictures for bulletin boards.

Marty and Carol Gaskill helped with preparations for Autumn Camping Weekend. Marty also studied our nest collection and is now working on a web site for the Upper Wabash Interpretive Services.

Master Gardeners Sharon Bowman and Betty Heffelfinger, with others, have taken on the chore of maintaining our outside garden and are willing to present classes in late winter on gardening.

Many individuals and families volunteered at Autumn Camping Weekend this year setting up sessions, handing out

materials, making chili, moving picnic tables, tearing down tents and a host of other jobs. I put out the call for help and you responded. There will continue to be an Autumn Camping Weekend with your help. Thank you all so much.

Thanks to all who donated dollars, as well, for Autumn Camping Weekend, both through the mail and in our donation box at the event. It will help us get through these tough times.

I still need your help and I hope it will be your New Year's resolution to volunteer. If you are willing to give us a hand, I will make sure that I find the right job for you.

I wanted to say thanks to all of you. Each of you with current records for volunteering will be invited to an appreciation meal in March of 2003.

You ask me why I love my job. It's because I have come to know you and your families and I feel like I've been blessed to have each and every one of you as a friend.

I hope you and your family enter into this new year with a sense of joy and accomplishment, knowing how much your efforts are appreciated as you help to improve the environment we share.

In Depth is a quarterly publication of the Interpretive Services for the Upper Wabash Reservoirs, Division of State Parks and Reservoirs, Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Responsibilities of the interpretive staff include educational and recreational programs, hiking trails, interpretive facilities, marketing/public relations, fiscal control, and resource inventory for Salamonie, Mississinewa and Huntington Reservoirs.

Under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the U.S. Government prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to:

DNR
Department of Natural Resources
Executive Office
402 W. Washington St. Room C256
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317)232-4020

Upcoming Events

Saturday Nature Club

The "Radical Junior Rangers" Saturday Nature Club meets from 9:30 a.m.-12 noon the first Saturday of each month during the fall and winter at the Salamonie Interpretive Center. The participation fee for the club has been sponsored by the Wabash Kiwanis, but advance registration is requested. This special program designed for outdoor-loving youth between the ages of 8-12. Saturday Nature Club is a fast-moving environmental education program with crafts, hikes and games.

Chill Out January 11th with ice fishing. There will be warmer fun too.

The February 1st club meeting will be in the evening from 6 to 8 p.m. Night Prowl involves a night hike and listening for owls.

March 1st is Living on the Edge. Try your hand at outdoor survival skills such as fire building and reading a compass.

The April 5th session is Smokey's Super Sixty. We'll celebrate Smokey Bear's sixtieth birthday with treats and discuss how fire can be both useful and destructive.



Upper Wabash Interpretive Services

Serving Mississinewa, Salamonie, and Huntington Reservoirs
in Grant, Miami, Wabash, Huntington, and Wells Counties

Salamonie Interpretive Center

Open

Wednesday - Friday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Closed Monday and Tuesday

Phone: 260/468-2127 Fax: 260/468-2194 E-mail: uwnatdnr@dnr.state.in.us

Senior Citizen's Afternoons

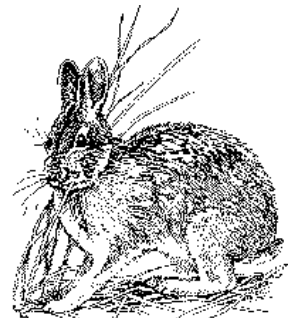
Bring a dish to share and enjoy fellowship and a meal. Meat is provided. 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Pre-registration is requested. Call for details.

January 6

February 3

March 3

April 7



Scout Nights

Call the Upper Wabash Interpretive Services to schedule a Scout Night activity. Pre-registration is required. We offer programming for both Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

Partnership Power

We would like to thank the Huntington County Visitor and Convention Bureau and Rose Meldrum for their efforts and sponsorship in conjunction with the Salamonie Interpretive Center Open House Ceremony.

You Can Get Involved Too!

Many visitors and friends of the Upper Wabash Interpretive Services have found time or other resources to help improve the opportunities made available at the three reservoirs.



Getting Involved

by Marv McNew

Recently I had the opportunity to attend the Environmental Education Association of Indiana (E.E.A.I.), Conference in Brown County. What a great conference! Nationally known speakers Doug Elliot and Fred Shaw “Neeake” were there; both have a gift of bringing the natural and cultural world alive with their stories. On a short hike with Doug, we were exploring what nature had to offer in edible and medicinal plants. Yes, we were eating plants out of the ground in November. Some were not bad, like spice bush, some others like wild ginger root, well let’s just say it doesn’t rank up there with pizza. Fred is the Principal Storyteller of the Shawnee Nation United Remnant Band. He told stories passed down as oral tradition from his elders. These stories were about connections between animals, plants and humans and how all have to be in balance in order for the earth to function properly. Other sessions ranged from new program ideas to the latest program presenting equipment.

These conferences are so important to those who work in the field of environmental interpretation - teachers, interpretive naturalists and all those who like to share the beauty of nature with others. Conferences help to bring together people who share the same ideals. Through these contacts you are able to share program ideas that have worked and bring back new ideas to use in the future.

I would strongly encourage those of you who feel a deep passion about the importance of managing our natural resources to get involved. Join environmental organizations, like E.E.A.I, National Association of Interpretation, Acres, or the Indiana Wildlife Federation. The list could go on and on. Become involved locally and help in anyway you can, from financially supporting the organization to being a board member. Let’s work together, roll up our sleeves, and make a difference today so that we will be able to enjoy the beauty of nature and all it has to offer tomorrow.

If you feel that you want to get involved and don’t know where to start, please contact me and I will let you know whom to contact within the state.

Wish List for the Upper Wabash Interpretive Services

Many of our friends and visitors have expressed interest in helping to support the programs and services provided by the UWIS. We've listed items below that would be helpful.

~~Table skirts—~~ Thank you!

~~Seating for the Foyer—~~

Nature books for the library

- field guides
- insect identification guides
- children's books

Household cleaners

Postage stamps

Computer zip disks for Macintosh

Simple craft supplies

- yarns, glue, scissors, glitter,
- colored paper & pipe cleaners

Nature magazines

- National Wildlife Federation
- Ranger Rick

Color printer compatible with

Macintosh and IBM computers

Coat tree

Carpet steamcleaner

Sponsorship for newsletter printing

Black oil sunflower seeds

High energy suet cakes

Copier paper - white & color

Hamster food for our mice

Small backpacks

Property Events

Once each year we like to provide you with a look at the many things property staff does to take care of the thousands of acres at Mississinewa, Salamonie, and Huntington Reservoirs. Reservoirs are designed for flood control, resource management, and recreation. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates the dam at each location and controls the water levels in the lakes. Indiana Department of Natural Resources staff members on each property maintain the recreation areas, buildings, trails, and wildlife management areas. Through all seasons of the year, staff members on each property strive to keep up with the multitude of tasks calling for their attention. This past year, seasonal staff reductions required a decrease in services at each of the three properties. Here are just a few of the things that are happening behind the scenes to provide you with the best services possible.

Mississinewa

The wildlife management efforts at Mississinewa this past year included planting 125 acres in sunflowers and millet and 75 acres in corn or sorghum. This property also has the largest acreage of the three in tenant farming.

The hunting seasons have been quite successful with more than 400 hunter efforts during the spring turkey hunting season. A new wetland was constructed in management unit S2S.

Self-registration posts were used to collect ramp fees requiring

the installation of new signs explaining this policy to users. Mississinewa has a very successful campground host program. Electricity was rerouted at the program shelter to provide better service for Autumn Camping Weekend events. Each campsite now has a new fire ring and new gravel.

A new sidewalk was built at the office and the pond shelter to make these areas more accessible. Three wastewater treatment plants that were too expensive to maintain were replaced with constructed wetlands to filter waste water in an environmentally friendly way.

Salamonie

Salamonie enlisted volunteers to maintain areas in the Lost Bridge East Recreation Area and implemented self-registration fee collection at the open boat ramps. These volunteers include staff members Dan Sills, Dave Kimmel, Jason Barnum, and Wayne Ley. Eagle Scouts have been utilized to remodel trails and bridges. The Horsemen's and Apple Orchard campgrounds were also designated as self-registration facilities.

Staff from Huntington Reservoir assisted the Salamonie staff in preparations for a very successful open house ceremony for the new interpretive center.

Fifteen miles of horse trails were re-marked and improved by a trail crew led by Kim Guy. Illegal trails were closed to help protect sensitive plant communities.

The appearance and use of the service area was improved by

expanding the storage area and building a new fence.

A Small Game Management Area was established in Wildlife Units S-3 and 30. This pilot project will intensively manage habitat and hunting efforts in an attempt to reestablish ground nesting bird populations and benefit small game animals.

Four wastewater treatment plants were replaced with constructed wetlands.

Micah Beals, Salamonie's mechanic, used his ingenuity to keep aging vehicles in safe running order, sometimes transplanting parts from retired vehicles to those in use.

A reduced mowing crew added the Interpretive Center grounds to their maintenance activities.

Recreation facilities were improved, including reroofing two shelters and the improvement of playground facilities. The cleanliness of bathrooms and showers has sparked compliments this year.

Huntington

An old diving platform was converted to an accessible fishing pier and added to the paved sidewalk at the pond in the Little Turtle Recreation Area.

Other recreation repairs and renovations included sidewalk repair, new roofs on restrooms, installation of grills, and renovation of campsites.

The campground roads were chipped and sealed. The property also kept the bulletin

Otter Know... (Continued)

by Teresa Rody

12 different sites, including Salamonie.

I remember watching the otters' last captive meal the evening before release and hearing a quiet chorus of crunch, crunch, crunch as they ate their fish. I had an insane mental urge to touch one of the otters. They were so close and so amazing. During the release the next day, one of the school children attempted to act on the very same urge. Thankfully, the otter swam just out of reach.

River otters have traveled to many places on the original watersheds and other waterways too. Otters occupy parts of at least 35 counties in Indiana and observations and deaths have been reported from 23 other counties. I had the privilege of seeing an adult with two pups near the Salamonie release area. Not everyone has considered otter sightings a joy, though. We visited a local private 1/4 acre pond in time to see a river otter catching a nice large bass. Usually they catch and eat slow moving "rough" fish, but this pond was the otter's private food bowl for almost a week.



Many local people came to the release and stop in from time to time to ask how the otters are doing. Along with dead otter recoveries from across the state, bridge and stream surveys, and

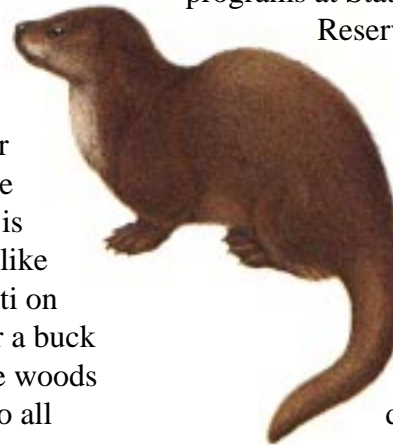
reported observations are used to monitor the river otters in the six watersheds. Reports of otters or their sign came from thirty-six

counties between January 2000 and June 2001.

Tracks, meal locations, and latrine sites are all easier to see when snow is on the ground, but can be found at other times as well. During my studying, I found out that the latrine sites are prominent places where any otter traveling through will leave its mark. This information is left for later interpretation like humans would leave graffiti on the side of a railroad car or a buck would leave a scrape in the woods to announce his presence to all other deer in the area.

Otter biologist, Scott Johnson states, "Although areas

occupied by otters remain relatively close to release sites, recovery of marked and unmarked individuals suggests other portions of the state have been colonized by otters emigrating from release areas or adjacent states." Your home could have otter nearby despite not being close to Salamonie or another release site. "The total number and the percentage of unmarked otters taken annually continues to increase, which further supports the assumption that river otters are becoming established in Indiana." In the 2001-2002 trapping season, 23 otters were taken with traps set for other species and turned in to the state. These otters provided information that is vital to the post-release evaluation efforts. We will be able to use some of their pelts for education about otters in programs at State Parks and Reservoirs.



Stop in at the property or call the Interpretive Center at 260-468-2127, to find out how you can use the next snowy day to help us increase the information we have about otters, quail, and bluebirds.

Answers to page 7 unscramble:
1. Snowman 2. Snowflake 3. Blizzard 4. Sledding 5. Skiing 6. Long Johns
7. Ice 8. Frozen 9. Icicle 10. Mittens 11. Boots 12. Sock Hat 13. Ear Muffs
14. Frost 15. Cold 16. Winter 17. Ice Fishing 18. Hibernation 19. Snow
20. Ice Skating 21. Hot Chocolate 22. Sweater

Winter Word Unscramble

Unscramble the words listed below and you will find
some of your favorite winter things!

by Lois Wajer

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. nawmons _____ | 12. cosk tha _____ |
| 2. wlafokens _____ | 13. rae sufmf _____ |
| 3. dlziarbz _____ | 14. torsf _____ |
| 4. dilegnsd _____ | 15. dolc _____ |
| 5. ikngis _____ | 16. rentiw _____ |
| 6. glno hjosn _____ | 17. cie sfiihgn _____ |
| 7. eci _____ | 18. arnebhtiino _____ |
| 8. zerofn _____ | 19. nswo _____ |
| 9. ceciils _____ | 20. eci tikangs _____ |
| 10. setnimt _____ | 21. tho lochaotec _____ |
| 11. tosob _____ | 22. twsaer _____ |

---Check your answers on page 6.



Crafty Evergreen Tree

To create this crafty tree you'll need one popsicle stick, some green construction paper or craft foam, glue, and a little creativity.

- 1) You can begin this project by either painting your popsicle stick brown or coloring it brown with a marker.
- 2) Then you'll need to cut three stars from your construction paper or craft foam. Cut one large star, a medium sized star, and one small star.
- 3) Place the largest star on the bottom, then glue the midsized star on top of it, next glue the smallest star on top.
- 4) Next glue them to the popsicle stick the largest star will be the base of the tree, therefore it will be glued directly to the popsicle with the smallest star at the top for the tree point.
- 5) Now you have your tree and you can decorate it however you like. Try adding snow or a winter garland in paint and ribbon.

Next year, recycle your real christmas tree for the birds. Anchor it in the yard and decorate it with unsalted peanuts, popcorn, apple pieces, peanut butter pincones or other edible treats!

Property... (Continued)

boards full of current information through the recreation season.

Ninety acres of sunflowers were planted in wildlife hunting areas and an additional fifteen were planted in safety zone areas. These fifteen acres were harvested and distributed to other state properties and nursing homes for bird feeding.

More than 30 people participated in this year's youth dove hunt and over 2000 participated in special dove and pheasant hunts.

Three property ponds were renovated for wildlife. They continue to manage the fishing in property ponds and weed treated some of the ponds for easier fishing.

Interpretive Center

The butterfly-hummingbird garden is being expanded to about twice its original size through the efforts of the Huntington Master Gardeners, Eagle Scout groups, and staff members Josh DeHaven, Adam Smart and Scott Miller. A small trail was routed from the building to the garden. This project was completed by an Eagle Scout candidate.

Other staff projects involved completing many small but important details to make the exhibits and open house successful. Daily maintenance of the building and the landscaping around it have proven time consuming but well worth the effort.

These many projects were woven around preparation and cleanup for many programs that we enjoyed seeing you attend. Come back and visit again!

WHO'S WHO AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

John Goss, Director
Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources

John Davis, Deputy Director
Bureau of Land, Forest, and Wildlife Resources

Gerald Pagac, Director
Division of State Parks & Reservoirs

Upper Wabash Reservoirs' Interpretive Services
9214 W. Lost Bridge W.
Andrews, IN 46702
Office at Salamonie Reservoir
uwnatdnr@dnr.state.in.us
260-468-2127(V/TDD)

Interpretive Specialist: Marvin McNew
Interpretive Staff: Teresa Rody

Lois Wajer
Interpretive Center Staff: Pam Hilton
Scott Miller

Salamonie Reservoir
9214 W. Lost Bridge W.
Andrews, IN 46702
260- 468-2125(V/TDD)
Property Manager: Dennis White
Reservoir Specialist: Tyson Edwards (wildlife)
Assistant Manager: Wayne Ley

Mississinewa Reservoir
4673 S 625 E
Peru, IN 46970
765-473-6528(V/TDD)
Property Manager: Larry Brown
Reservoir Specialist: Mike Renie (wildlife)
Assistant Manager: Ron Hileman

Huntington Reservoir
517 N. Warren Road
Huntington, IN 46750
260-468-2165(V/TDD)
Property Manager: Jeff Reed (wildlife)
Assistant Manager: position vacant

DNR

In Depth

Upper Wabash Reservoirs
Interpretive Services
9214 W. Lost Bridge West
Andrews, IN 46702-9731

PRESORTED
STANDARD
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